Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 098122
ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 ICAE-00
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DRAFTED BY AF/E:KPGARLAND:JJ
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 098122

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, ET, US

SUBJECT: RECALL OF POLITICAL COUNSELOR

REF: ADDIS ABABA 1757

1. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARROP CALLED IN ETHIOPIAN CHARGE TIBEBU BEKELE APRIL 17 TO PROTEST MOFA ACTION IN REQUESTING RECALL OF POLITICAL COUNSELOR. HARROP MADE POINTS BEING FORWARDED TO YOU SEPTEL FOR ORAL PROTEST AT MOFA. HARROP ADDED THAT PMGSE SEEMS TO BE TAKING ALMOST SYSTEMATICALLY, UNFRIENDLY ATTITUDE TOWARD US. GIVEN LONG HISTORY OF COOPERATION BETWEEN US, WE WANT TO UNDERSTAND PMGSE ACTIONS BUT ARE BAFFLED BY CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION DOES NOT NEED TO OVERTURN THE RELATIONSHIP WHICH EXISTS BETWEEN US AND THAT WE CAN BUILD A BETTER DIALOGUE. THAT IS WHY WE ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 STATE 098122

THAT AGREMENT FOR OUR PROPOSED AMBASSADOR HAS NOT BEEN FORTHCOMING.

2. THIS LATEST ACTION AGAINST MALIN SEEMS LIKE A CONSCIOUS BACKHANDED SLAP AT US, HARROP NOTED. COMING IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER PMGSE ACTIONS SINCE AARON MISSION, WE WONDER IF ETHIOPIA STILL WANTS TO FOLLOW A

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT AS THE AARON MISSION WAS TOLD

OR WHETHER PMGSE HAS CHOSEN TO FOLLOW ANOTHER COURSE. HARROP ADDED THAT FOLLOWING THE AARON CONVERSATIONS IN ADDIS, WE INCREASED OUR PRESSURE ON THE SOMALIS TO WITHDRAW AND WE ARE NOW WITHHOLDING DEFENSIVE MILITARY ASSISTANCE UNTIL SOMALIS STATE RESPECT FOR EXISTING BORDERS.

3. CHARGE SAID HE HAD NOT YET RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS FROM ADDIS SO HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT MALIN CASE. HE EXPRESSED HOPE MALIN DID MAKE WRITTEN REQUEST TO TRAVEL AND FOLLOWED REGULATIONS. HARROP STATE MALIN MADE REQUEST AND IN ABSENCE OF ANY NEGATIVE REPLY FROM MOFA WENT ON HIS TRIP. THIS IS STANDARD PRACTICE AMONG DIPLOMATS IN ADDIS.

4. CHARGE THEN TURNED TO SUBJECT US/ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS. HE ARGUED THAT PMGSE STATEMENTS - EVEN IF NEGATIVE - HAD LITTLE IMPACT IN US BUT ANY STATEMENT BY IMPORTANT US LEADER IMPACTED STRONGLY IN ADDIS AND NEARBY CAPITALS. THUS, ETHIOPIANS ARE PARTICULARLY UPSET BY PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS IN LAGOS WHICH - INETHIOPIAN EYES - IMPLIED PROUDLY INDEPENDENT ETHIOPIA HAD PUT SELF IN HANDS OF SOVIETS AND THAT ETHIOPIA COULD ONLY DEFEND HERSELF WITH FOREIGNERS. HE REPEATED STANDARD ETHIOPIAN ARGU-
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PAGE 03 STATE 098122

MENTS ABOUT RIGHT TO CALL IN FOREIGN ASSISTANCE. HE WENT ON TO COMPLAIN ABOUT CONTINUOUS ANTI-ETHIOPIAN LINE IN AMERICAN PRESS WHICH USG COULD CERTAINLY MANAGE TO DEFLECT IF IT ONLY WANTED TO. HE CONCLUDED THAT, IF US DID NOT MAKE SOME EFFORT TO AVOID UNFRIENDLY STATEMENTS,THEN TENSIONS IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WOULD CONTINUE.

5. AS BEKELE HAD MENTIONED AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S STATEMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS AS EXAMPLE OF UNFRIENDLY STATEMENT, HARROP EXPLAINED OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POSITION AND OUR INABILITY TO UNDERSTAND WHY POSITIVE SIDE OF COIN - OUR AID PROGRAM - WAS NOT BEING ACCEPTED BY PMGSE. BEKELE RETORTED THAT FAILURE TO ACCEPT AID IS NOT AN INDICATION OF UNFRIENDLINESS. CONVERSATION THEN FOLLOWED FAMILIAR PATTERN OF WHETHER US STATEMENTS ARE CRITICAL OF ETHIOPIA AS PMGSE BELIEVES OR OF THE RUSSIAN AND CUBAN ACTIONS IN THE HORN AS WE INTEND. BEKELE REPEATED SOVIET/CUBAN PRESENCE EXISTS FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSE OF DEFENDING ETHIOPIA'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. HE NOTED ERITREA WOULD PROBABLY BE NEXT TROUBLE SPOT AND IF WE CRITICIZE SOVIET/CUBAN ACTIONS THERE, NOTHING WILL IMPROVE

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

IN OUR RELATIONSHIP. AS WE HAVE DONE NOTHING TO STOP
ARAB INTERFERENCE IN ERITREA, ETHIOPIANS WILL CALL ON

WHATEVER RESOURCES ARE NECESSARY TO RESOLVE THAT PROBLEM.

CHRISTOPHER

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EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
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